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R 091016Z MAY 07
FM AMEMBASSY DILI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3511
INFO RUCNARF/ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM COLLECTIVE
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0951
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP
RUEHLI/AMEMBASSY LISBON 0901
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 1010
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0752
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0692
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 0836
RUEHROV/AMEMBASSY VATICAN 0140
RUEHDT/AMEMBASSY DILI 2874

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 DILI 000185

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP/MTS,IO,DRL,R
PACOM FOR POLAD AND JOC
TOKYO FOR KLEMM
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KDEM](#) [KPAO](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [UN](#) [TT](#)

SUBJECT: LOWER TURNOUT BUT TECHNICALLY IMPROVED ROUND TWO VOTING

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¶1. Summary: The second round of East Timor's presidential election concluded May 9 without incident. There were visible improvements compared to the first round with regard to logistical preparations. The Embassy will urge all parties to use established legal mechanisms for filing complaints, to wait for results to be finalized, and will stress that the results of an election that is free and fair and reflects the will of the people should be peacefully accepted by all parties. End summary.

¶2. Voting in the second round of East Timor's presidential election concluded May 9 to select between current Prime Minister Jose Ramos-Horta and Fretilin party leader Francisco "Lu'Olo" Guterres. East Timor generally has been calm today and the election proceeded without significant apparent security, logistical, or political problems. Participation based on anecdotal observation appeared to be slightly lower than in the April 9 first round of 81.7 percent of registered voters, but likely will be still high by international standards. Many of the logistical problems of the first round, such as late arrival of ballots and materials, appear to have been resolved.

¶3. Some polling officials enforced limits on the number of international observers allowed in at one time and there was confusion at times about the access international observers were permitted. There were some unconfirmed allegations that parties bribed voters to vote for their candidate or purchased voter identification cards in order to manipulate the vote. Voters and citizens will have 24 hours to file complaints about the voting and counting process. Post will monitor this process as well as encourage Timorese to use established legal mechanisms for lodging complaints.

¶4. The U.S. Mission sent nine teams of observers throughout East Timor to monitor the vote. All are reporting in regularly and coordinating with the DCM and RSO. Preliminary results will not be available until later this week. U.S. Mission observers will monitor the counting and tabulation process. The U.S. Mission will coordinate with UNMIT and other diplomatic missions to urge continued calm and responsible behavior as the results are tabulated and announced.

15. Suggested press guidance follows.

Begin text.

---We congratulate the people and institutions of East Timor on organizing the final round of their presidential election. Initial reports from Embassy and international election monitoring teams indicate that today's presidential election proceeded peacefully with active turnout by Timorese exercising their right to vote. It is still too early to judge the extent or effect of any irregularities.

--- We understand that the tabulation of election returns will take several days. We join the international community in reiterating that the results of an election that is free and fair and reflects the will of the people should be accepted by all parties. Any concerns regarding electoral misconduct should be pursued through the dispute mechanisms established by Timorese law and regulations.

--- We will continue to monitor the situation in East Timor as the country welcomes its new president and looks ahead to the June 30 parliamentary election. We will be coordinating with UNMIT and encouraging the Timorese electoral authorities to carefully investigate any allegations of voter intimidation or manipulation of the vote and will urge parties to use the established dispute mechanisms.

End text.

Background:

East Timor held the second round of its presidential election on May 9. Prime Minister Jose Ramos-Horta and President of the Parliament Francisco "Lu'Olo" Guterres competed. The presidency is a largely ceremonial position, but it does possess important veto powers. Moreover, the elections could serve as an

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indicator of public opinion in advance of the June 30 parliamentary election.

The U.S. Government has provided over \$1.2 million of technical assistance through USAID to support the elections and the development of democratic institutions in East Timor in areas such as support to domestic election monitors, media training, political party training, and assistance to the National Electoral Commission (CNE), the independent oversight body for the electoral process.

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